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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicant: Dong et al.  
Serial No.: Not Yet Assigned  
Filed: January 18, 2000  
For: METHOD OF CASE HARDENING  
Art Unit: Not Yet Assigned  
Examiner: Not Yet Assigned  
Attorney Docket: 360.6933USU

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

Sir:

In accordance with applicant's duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. §1.56, please find attached hereto form PTO-1449 listing information which may be material to the patentability of this application, filed concurrently herewith. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed:

- XX Within three (3) months of the filing date of the national application;  
\_\_\_\_ Within three (3) months of the date of entry of the national stage as set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.491 in an international application;  
\_\_\_\_ Before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits;  
\_\_\_\_ After the filing date or date of first Office Action, but before the mailing date of a final action under 37 C.F.R. §1.113, provided that this occurs prior to the issuance of a Notice of Allowance and provided that this I.D.S. is accompanied by either a certification as specified in 37 C.F.R. §1.97(e) or the fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(p);

- \_\_\_\_\_ After the filing date or date of first Office Action, but before the mailing date of a Notice of Allowance under 37 C.F.R. §1.311, provided that this occurs prior to the final action and provided that this I.D.S. is accompanied by either a certification as specified in 37 C.F.R. §1.97(e) or the fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(p);
- \_\_\_\_\_ After the mailing date of a final action under 37 C.F.R. §1.113, provided that this occurs prior to the issuance of a Notice of Allowance and provided that this I.D.S. is accompanied by either a certification as specified in 37 C.F.R. §1.97(e), a petition requesting consideration of the I.D.S., and the petition fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(i)(1); and
- \_\_\_\_\_ After the mailing date of a Notice of Allowance under 37 C.F.R. §1.311, provided that this occurs prior to the issuance of a final action and provided that this I.D.S. is accompanied by either a certification as specified in 37 C.F.R. §1.97(e), a petition requesting consideration of the I.D.S., and the petition fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(l)(1).

Also enclosed are copies of Japanese Abstracts for 030362560; 03294471 and 61207568; European Patent No. 0 244 253 and PCT Publication No. WO 96/23908.

Also enclosed are two articles. The first entitled "The Oxidation of Zirconium in Oxygen-Nitrogen Atmospheres" and the second "Surface Hardening of Titanium by Oxygen".

It should be understood that attention has been called to the references that have been deemed to be pertinent to the claimed present invention. In concluding what was pertinent, the criteria employed was considered most appropriate in light of the invention shown in the present application. However, the Examiner or others may deem some other criteria to be just as appropriate or more appropriate. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully urged to review the listed references and to make the usual careful independent search for other prior art that may be pertinent.

Respectfully submitted,



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January 18, 2000

FORM PTO-1449

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION  
IN AN APPLICATION

(Use several sheets if necessary)

Docket Number (Optional)

360.6933USU

Applicant

Dong et al.

Filing Date

January 18, 2000

Application Number

Not Yet Assigned

Group Art Unit

Not Yet Assigned

## U. S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

EXAMINER INITIAL	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
	5,588,443	12/31/96	James A. Davidson	128	772	

## FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Translation	
						YES	NO
	30362560	2/15/91	Japan (Abstract)			X	
	03294471	12/25/91	Japan (Abstract)			X	
	61207568	9/13/86	Japan (Abstract)			X	
	0 244 253	11/4/87	European			X	
	WO 96/23908	8/8/96	PCT			X	

## OTHER DOCUMENTS (including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)

	"The Oxidation of Zirconium in Oxygen-Nitrogen Atmospheres" by Casimir Rosa et al., pps. 470-474, January 14, 1980 as appeared in Z. Metallkde
	"Surface Hardening of Titanium by Oxygen" by Akira Takamura, pps. 10-14, as appeared in Trans JIM 1962, Vol. 3

EXAMINER

DATE CONSIDERED

EXAMINER: Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP §609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to the applicant.